

# EAST BAY



# FOOD NOT BOMB



# HISTORY

East Bay Food Not Bombs started in February, 1991 with people from Seeds of Peace, Copwatch, and the Berkeley Free Clinic. We served food at anti-Gulf War rallies. The Gulf War ended by the beginning of summer, and then all hell broke loose in People's Park. That historic piece of land in Berkeley became our focus. Currently we serve food in People's Park five days a week. On Mondays we serve in Oakland.

Food Not Bombs provides a meal that can only be described as a sumptuous feast: hot stews, beans and rice, fruit and vegetable salads, breads and pastries . . . sometimes pizza, corn on the cob, or bagels with cream cheese.

Starving artists, poor radicals, punks, homeless people, mothers with young children, college students, Berkeley tourists, even local storekeepers eat with Food Not Bombs. East Bay Food Not Bombs enjoys the support of the community and is not hassled by the police.

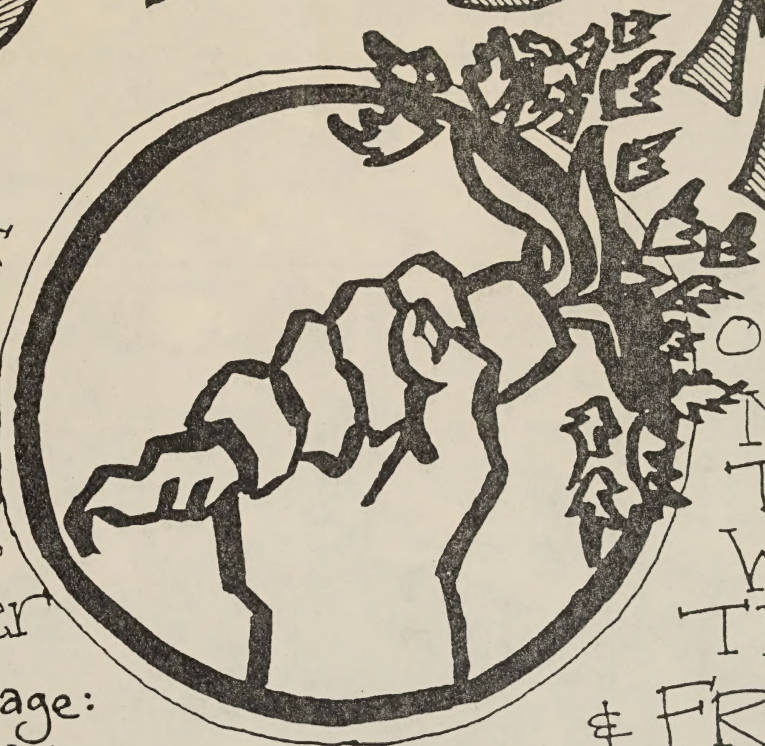




COMMUNITY HELPING ITSELF!

# Food Not Bombs

Cook  
Serve  
Eat  
Clean  
Compost  
Grow  
Gather



MON.  
TUES.  
WED.  
THURS.

& FRI.

★ Leave a Message:  
(510) 644-4187  
Meetings: 8:00 PM WED.  
Long Haul in Berkeley  
3124 Shattuck Ave.

2:00 PM & almost always later  
Cooking begins around 11:00

# Free Vegan Food In The People's Park



# WHAT IT'S ABOUT

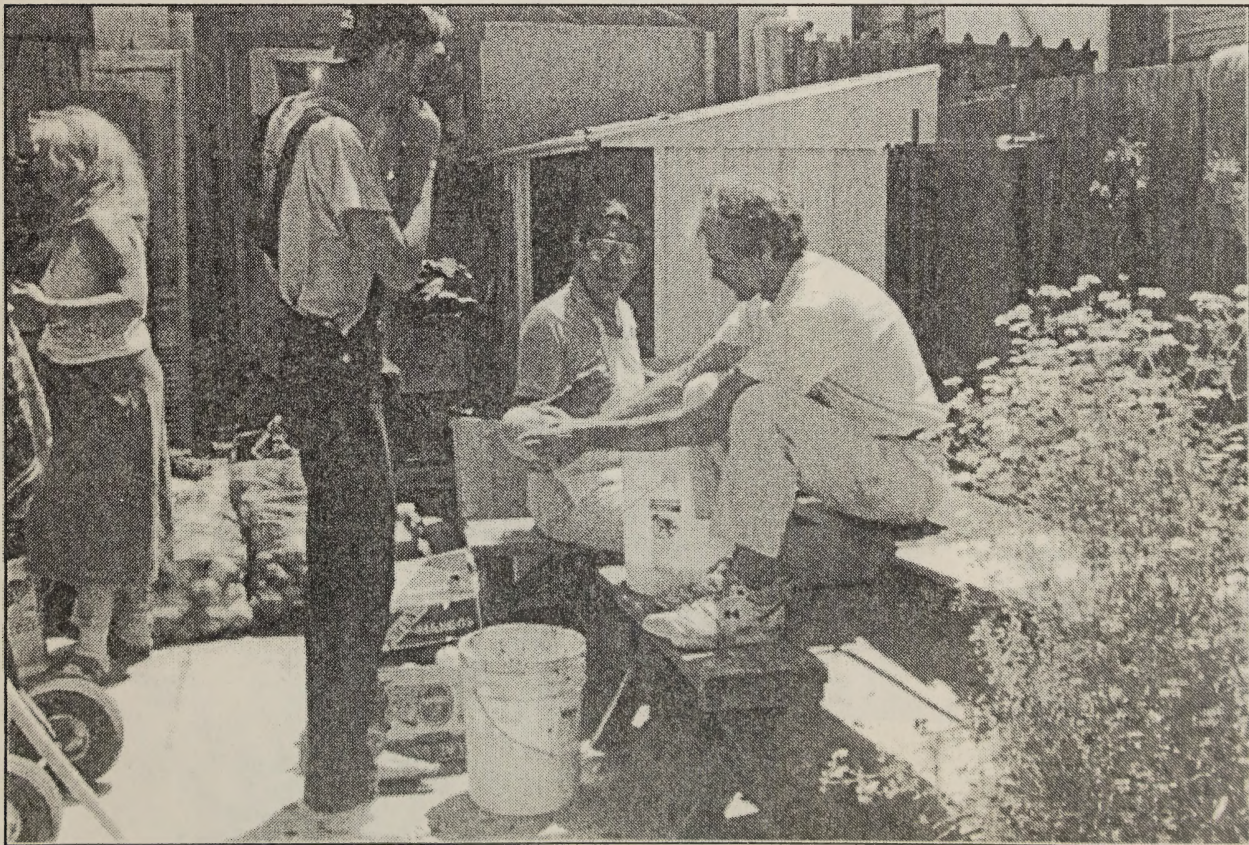
More than just food decays around this country. That stench we all smell is moral decay, the sickness of the crummy establishment. Those who rule the roost in this superabundant American backyard have arranged it so that not all inhabitants have their share of food, the basic necessity of life. What better way to expose this raw deal than to give people free food—good food which this wasteful system would throw away as garbage.

How better to care for the Earth than to compost and recycle? What better way to build community—in a society where more and more people withdraw into loneliness—than around the sharing of food? This is what Food Not Bombs is about.

We take pride in serving the most delicious, nutritious vegetarian meals, out in the open, free to whoever wants to eat—no strings attached, no prayers required. It's a big community picnic.









x days a week East Bay  
Not Bombs gathers food  
from various sources. Our fruits  
and vegetables are surplus from  
wholesale produce markets, or  
are rejected as less than  
perfect by fine food stores such  
as Monterey Foods. From  
Mama's Bagels, Uprisings Bak-  
ery and Whole Foods we get an  
excess supply of day-old bagels  
and whole grain breads. From  
Desserts scrumptious past-  
ries. Rockridge Cafe donates  
mashed potatoes, both baked  
and hash-browned. The Cheese  
and Collective occasionally  
donates us half a dozen beautiful  
pies.

Once Living Foods Store suf-  
fered a long power outage and  
we all heir to buckets-full of ice  
cream and frozen yogurt. It was  
crystallized from thawing and  
freezing but was still delicious.  
Sometimes we get gifts from out-  
side the blue, like the day four  
bags of organically grown gar-  
lic showed up. And sometimes  
excellent food wastefully  
ends up in dumpsters!





Yes, six days a week East Bay Food Not Bombs procures, transports, chops, cooks, serves, cleans up afterwards. Never do we lack people to perform these tasks. (Well, hardly ever.) finding an insured, registered, large-enough, operating vehicle gets a bit tricky at times.

We do need cash to purchase staples such as utensils, rice and beans, salt and spices. A number of FNB'ers are talented musicians and play in bands which perform concerts to raise funds. Sometimes we get paid for catering a meal for another organization's event. On summer weekends in various parks we serve juice and bagels for San Francisco Mime Troupe performances. Generous audiences contribute to us as well as to the Mime Troupe.

We meet each week to plan our daily work. We attend City of Berkeley meetings to keep an eye on those who would push us out of People's Park. And if there's a demonstration for a good cause, we show our support by serving food to everyone present. We even offer pastry to the police. Yes, we work hard but do have fun at East Bay Food Not Bombs.





# JAMES

I've been doing volunteer work for Food Not Bombs for about one and a half years. I have been eating FNB about two years. I go dumpster-diving with my friends often so I know how much food goes to waste ... the food, it just isn't pretty any more. FNB fits my diet and my idealistic nature: the food is generally vegan. Always vegetarian, it is served outside, we are not run by a rigid overseer like the church or the government. We are anarchistic in nature and in practice: we organize ourselves and everything is decided on the spot from what to cook to how to get it where it's going). All this makes me realize that I am part of something

The politics of the way Food Not Bombs runs is far superior to any bureaucracy that I can imagine. We all get along like family and are genuinely conscious of the respect due one another. Anyone with the desire can contribute in one way or another: one can cook, clean, serve, pick up food and supplies, organize and/or act locally, etc. Someone is always responsible for each day's meal but no one is the ultimate boss or leader. More than the greedy motivations of power and money is the motivation to feed oneself. People are too concerned about personal gain and not concerned enough about others around them. FNB is interested in the well-being of others as well as our own.

Many things have failed me in my life. Religion has failed me; government has failed all of us; parental discipline is inadequate for me (but not parental love!); the education system has failed me (I feel cheated!). The world around us is falling apart—nothing is right, it seems. Militaristic government control over our lives is killing our very nature as nurturing beings, and is ultimately failing the planet. Food Not Bombs works consistently and has not failed me.

Out of all the things you can do to lift this Earth to a higher standard than we have now, I think probably feeding a fellow hungry human being would be the unselfish basis of everything. FNB is not about self-education for me and I was quite reluctant to make an entry into this book. I decided to make my entry as I realized that any good idea is worth repeating. I believe the problem with a lot of people and their causes is

that they are more about themselves than about the people who the focus should be on.

Food Not Bombs is a simple idea. Me and my friends cook some food. We have a picnic and invite everyone who wants to come. We eat. Period. As I told Lydia when she first joined us: you want to learn about Food Not Bombs? Grab a cutting board, a knife and a carrot. Have a seat.





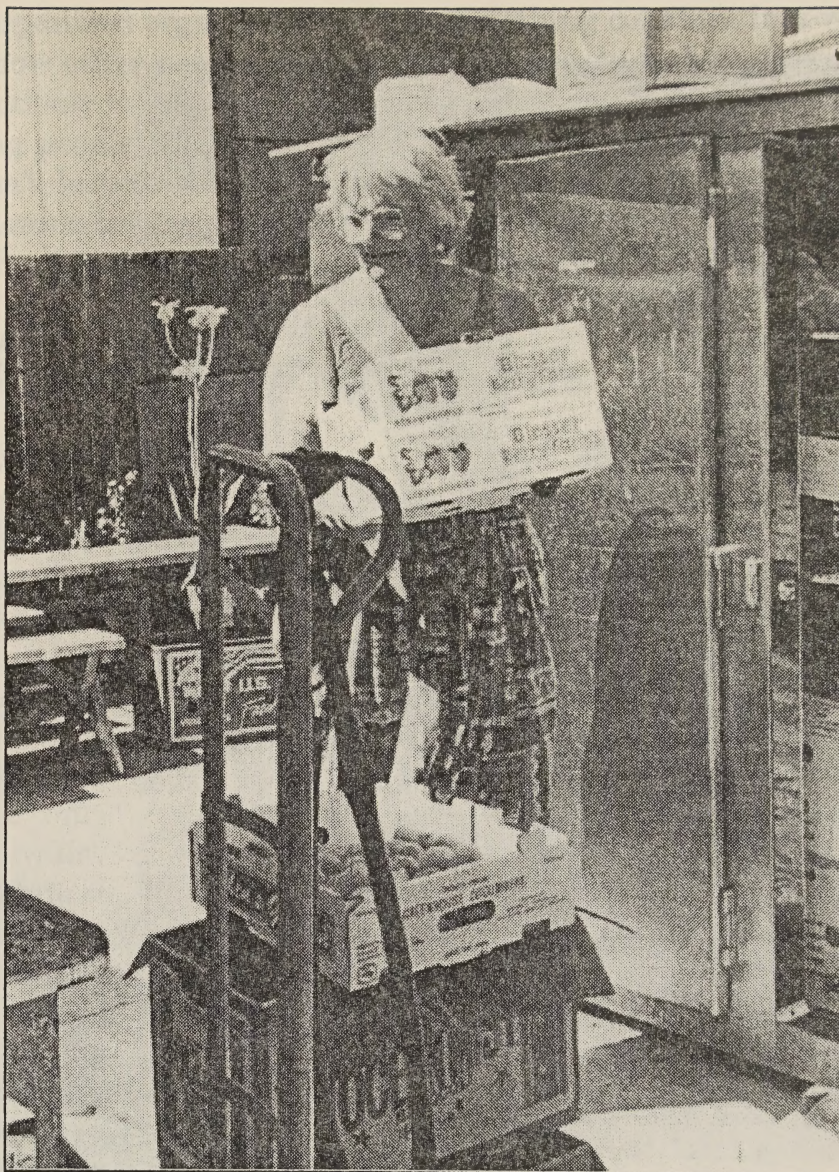
# JUDY

I've been doing Food Not Bombs since the Gulf War ended. I've lived in Berkeley 25 years. I arrived just in time to see People's Park created and see the town turned into a World War II movie by our then governor Reagan. I really wasn't very much involved in the creation of the Park and over the years became even less so. Part of the reason I started working with FNB was to find out for myself what was going on in the Park. Was it really dangerous? Who really did use the Park and what was it like to be there? I lead a busy life and do not spend much time in parks ordinarily—doing FNB gave me a reason for being there.

I've been cooking for a living for the last 18 years. I've been truly involved in working for change through direct action ever since Three Mile Island. Food Not Bombs appealed to me as something real, something positive, something with immediate results that I could do—a place where my skills could be put to use.

I cook every Tuesday with anywhere from two to ten other people. We use mostly donated food and serve it in People's Park. (Sunday, which I haven't cooked for yet, is served downtown Oakland.) It's a free meal and all sorts of people come, anywhere from 40 to 100. At the end of the month, the line is very long, filled with students, Telegraph Avenue crowd people, people traveling through, as well as people who are having a hard time living their lives.

I love the people I work with. They are a creative, dedicated, hard working bunch. Our commitment (my lifelong one) is to the creation of community. We cook and serve to anyone who cares to eat (including ourselves) not as an act of charity but to empower as well as nourish. We succeed in a modest way. The best you can do in these terrible times (the Kali Yuga, some call it) is to hold on to each other and work for change.





# INASHAH



I'm a Chiracahua-Apache born in Taos, New Mexico after the Second World War. I traveled a lot. By the time I was twenty, I had already traveled around the planet four times. I joined Dr. Tom Dooley's hospital in Laos in the early 60's and was there for three-and-a-half years.

I got involved with Food Not Bombs in Cambridge, Mass. in the late 70's. I love being around food; food is also part of my background in medicine. And my medicine is about food. Food is your medicine, medicine is your food. I align myself with vital life force energies and food is one of them.

In Food Not Bombs people come together from different perspectives, ethnicities, backgrounds, experiences, and ages. It's a spectrum of many different kinds of people and we come together in a common way. I like it. I like it because it reinforces our belief systems. It

forces what we come to understand as one way of dealing with human suffering. The beauty is how people come together. This is one way that we can get real with one another. Come together to prepare food for people who need it. Food Not Bombs is like a garden. It's like coming together to work in a garden, only the garden has already been seeded, in this case for us. We're picking the food in a different way from, say, picking the soil. We're sorting.

It's the work. It is purpose. It is intention. A social statement. We have to alleviate the suffering in society at large, wherever we can, however we can.



# MIKE

Food Not Bombs is a very unorganized organization. It is something constant in a very inconstant society. It shows me how other people—young and old, people with houses and people without—can work together collectively to make our community a better place. A very vibrant thing with an end result—feeding people who are hungry. The feeling of happiness and fulfillment is something words can't describe. For me it is almost therapeutic, chopping and cooking and sharing. What I always say is, "Remember, helping people in a true sense is better than anything high on the planet." Thank you Food Not Bombs. You make me feel alive in a way I never thought possible.

LOVE, PEACE, FOOD, HOPE, NOW AND ALWAYS.





# TERRI COMPOST

My first job when I turned sixteen was at McDonalds. Why, I wanted to know, couldn't we have all those hamburgers that we threw away to the dog pound? Because of "insurance" told me. It was my first glimmer of a system fueled by greed, insanity and a death wish, made less sense the more I learned about hamburgers, insurance, nuclear weapons, perspiring—you name it.

But Food Not Bombs does make sense. FOOD, NOT BOMBS. Get it? Let's use our resources to make life better. And it's so tangible. We don't just meet to talk about organizing against hunger. We cook food and give it away. And we preserve society's resources.

Think about a head of lettuce. Think about the topsoil lost, the poisons used, the water wasted, the labor needed to breed, plant, tend, harvest, ship, and sell this head of lettuce. Think about the environmental impacts of most agri-business techniques, of the trucking, packaging. Think of the consolidation of corporate power this lettuce may (or may not) represent. And after all that it

is sent to the landfill just because of brown edges. Food Not Bombs, recyclers extraordinaire—transforming would-be garbage into nourishment. Tasty! Healthy! Smart! There's more to praise: the volunteers, the free economy, consensus decision making, organizing, farming, local business support of demonstration, down home fun, and hosting!

Food Not Bombs becomes what a community needs it. It's a model for working together to get everyone





# TRISTAN

I had heard of the Food Not Bombs concept in 1988, but since I lived in a small rural town there wasn't much I could do. In 1991 I was visiting Berkeley, spending a nice sunny day at People's Park, and a picnic showed up. It was a wonderful day. The month after that I moved to Berkeley and soon got involved in East Bay Food Not Bombs. Everyone taught me how to cook, and there were always plenty of dishes for me to do.

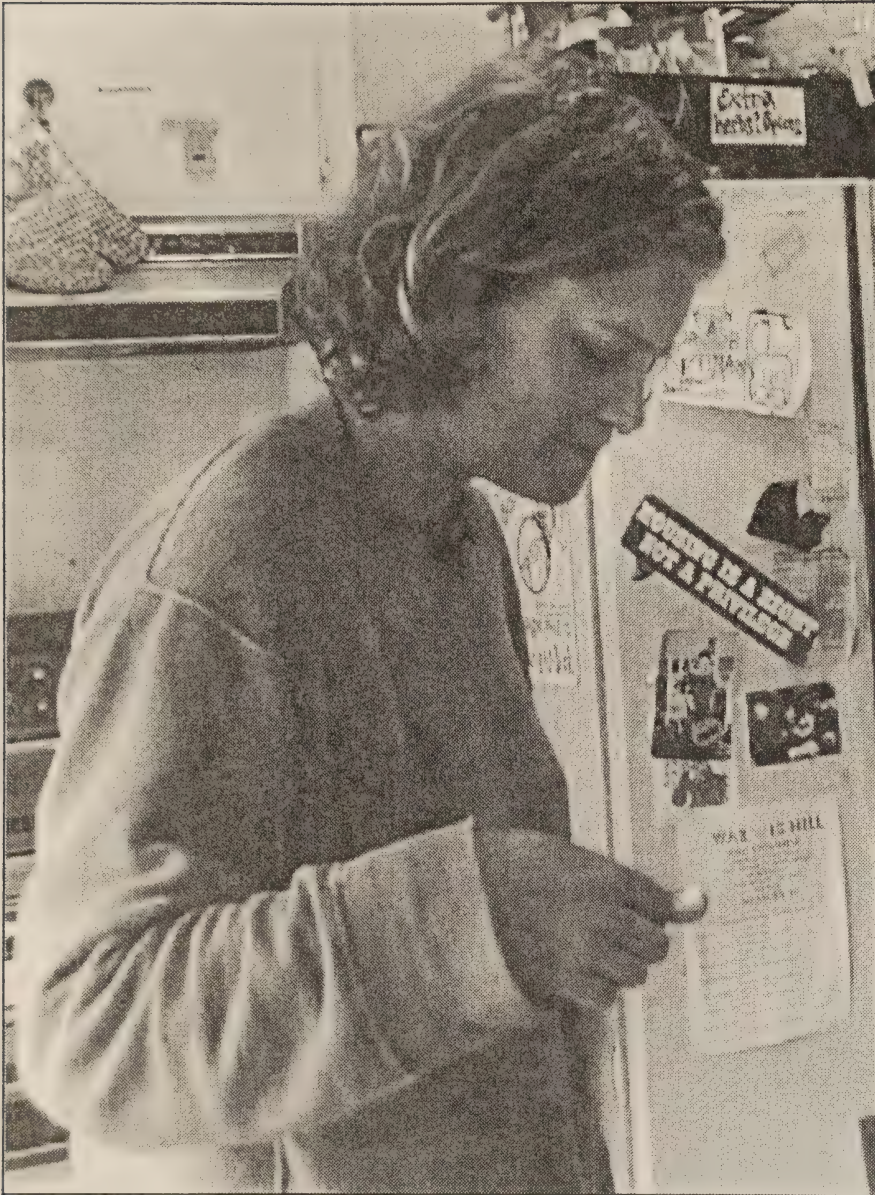
We weren't just fighting for a better world, we were beginning to create it. We didn't feed people out of pity, we fed ourselves and our friends and had a fun time. Then I was homeless for two and a half years but through Food Not Bombs we had created a whole community

that took care of ourselves. People let me stay in their homes and helped me out, and I had tons of time to work on Food Not Bombs and other projects that we believed in. Then more I gave to Food Not Bombs the more I got back and I knew I was making positive change in the world and helping hundreds of people. So if you're broke and starving or have a million dollars in your pocket, come over to People's Park and enjoy a sunny day with interesting conversation and good food.





# FRAUKE



*Frauke, 20 years old, visited from Germany and gave her impressions after three weeks of living with Food Not Bombs.*

never expected that compost can turn so delicious, never expected to live so well from leftovers of society. I learned to see the difference between charitable institutions and Food Not Bombs—people cook for people, not people cook for the poor. We eat on the same street, on the street.

got to know people while eating that I'd hardly make contact with normally. Food Not Bombs is open, free and happens in people's kitchens and on the street.

STAY THERE, STAY RADICAL! I'll spread the idea in Germany.



# EMANUEL

I got involved with East Bay Food Not Bombs last Fall after moving to Berkeley from Petersburg, Florida. FNB represents to me exactly the kind of organization I believe in. We are fulfilling a basic human need and building an alternative institution based on cooperation, sharing and direct community participation.

Right now we use the surplus of a super-abundant and disgustingly wasteful society which puts profits before people. (Even the Berkeley Bowl recently locked up their dumpsters). While this type of salvaging is both moral and expedient, one day I hope we will form a FNB farm and supplement this corporate by-product with our own organic vegetables and grains. This culture of over-consumption and greed will not last forever, and so I think it is important that our counter-institutions function independently (or could when the time comes).

I think of FNB as part of a broader network of similar organizations fulfilling other human needs (Homes Not Jails and the Berkeley Free Clinic, for example).

The means *are* the ends, and together we can make a difference.





# HEATHER

When I first came out to the Bay Area it was just one of many stops along the way. I was traveling just for the sake of the freedom to, having no destination in mind. When I arrived, I ended up staying a month, doing FNB every day and squatting with an amazing group of people. That was mainly our existence. FNB in the morning, kickball in the park, hanging out at Chateau, hanging out, dumpster diving at night, and just enjoying each other. It became my family. We were all dedicated to FNB and what it stands for—revolution at the most basic of levels, keeping each other healthy, sharing free food.

Well, I was *supposed* to be traveling so I made myself leave, but I came back in another month. This was home. I found it.

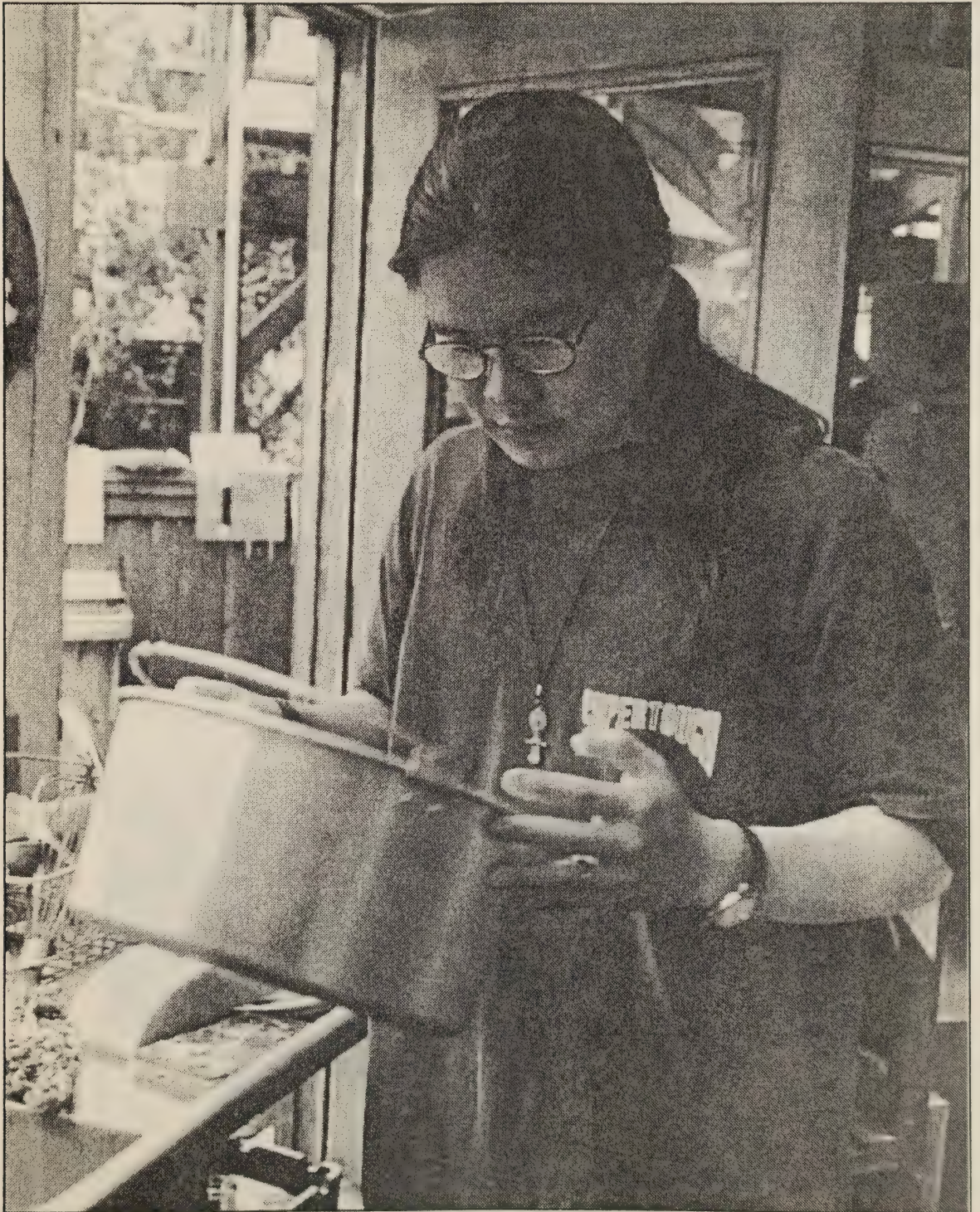
Food and shelter are a basic, natural right, not something you should have to pay for. Why is it money anyway? Food Not Bombs is my family, a way of life.





# YIT

I think Food Not Bombs helps create an important sense of community amongst all of us who feel alienated and disenfranchised in mainstream consumer society. It's helped me empower myself and meet many good people who feel a similar need to create some kind of viable alternative community that is not based on greed and exploitation but on kindness and caring.

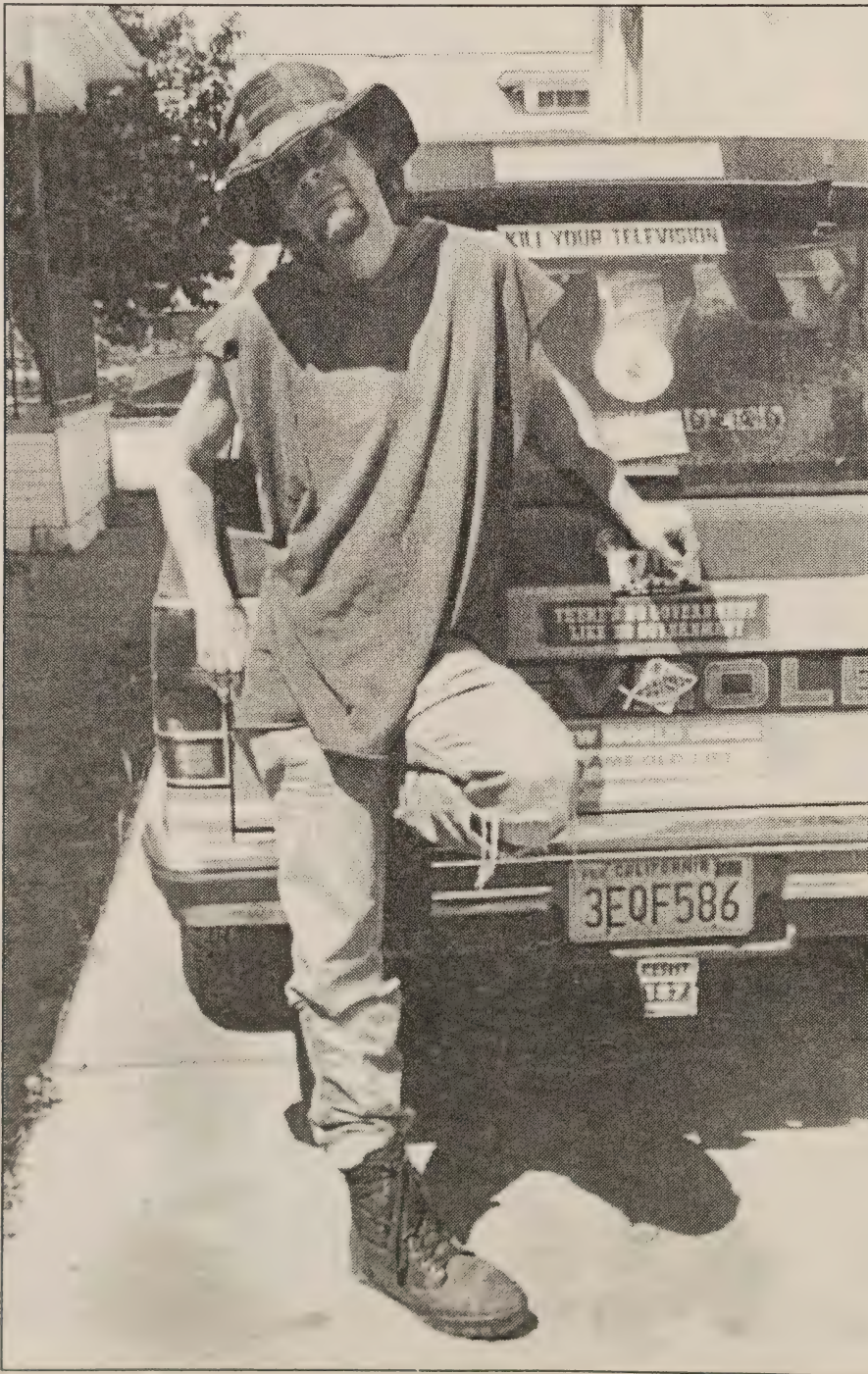




# CHIP

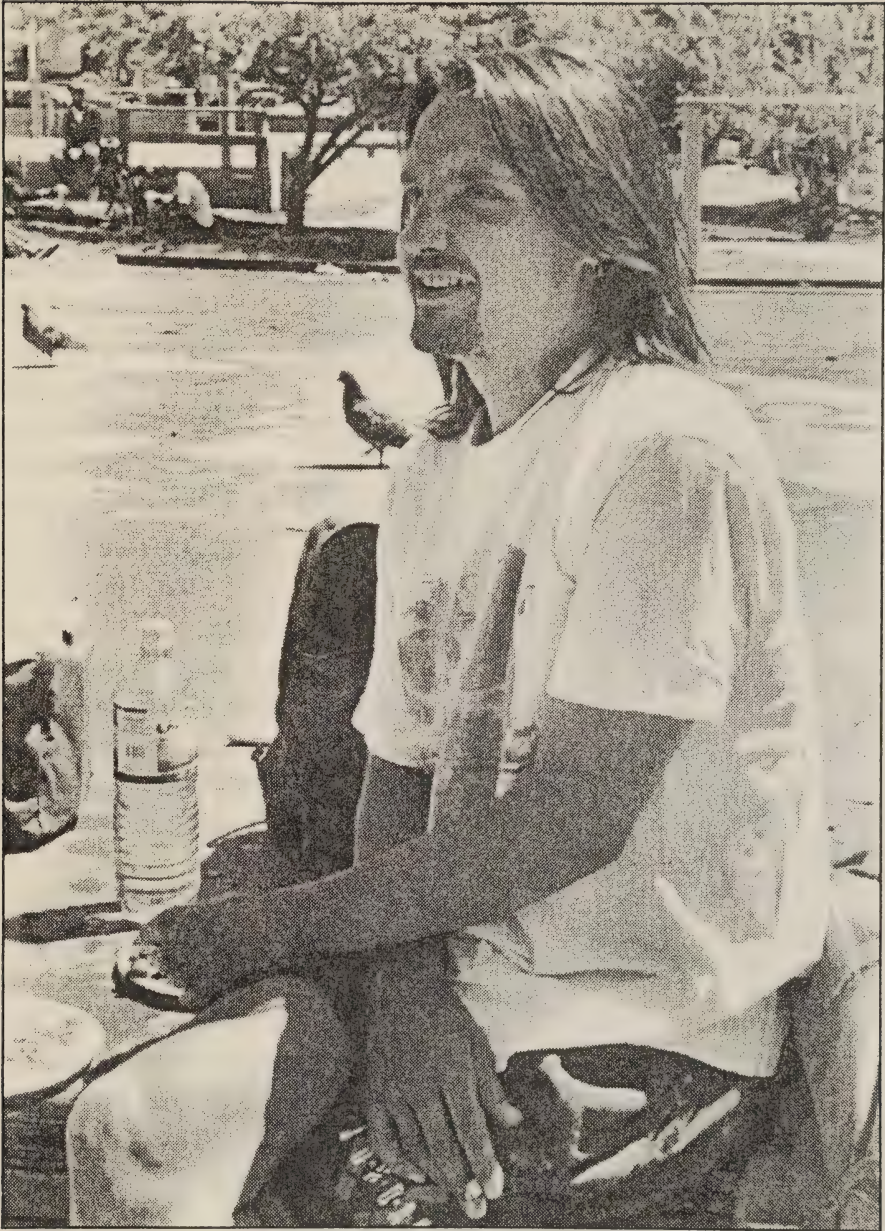
Food Not Bombs seems like the only meaningful part of my life right now. It keeps me grounded and connected to the Berkeley community. When I first moved here a few years ago, I met FNB along with the Free Box, the Hate Man, and a few other friends that kept me sane.

Food Not Bombs is such a simple concept that really gets to the roots of healing and positive change for the community as well as the individuals involved. The group of people that make up FNB are really fun to work and eat with, and I feel that we all share a sincere desire to make a difference in an otherwise increasingly fucked-up world. Or at least a sincere desire to make lunch.





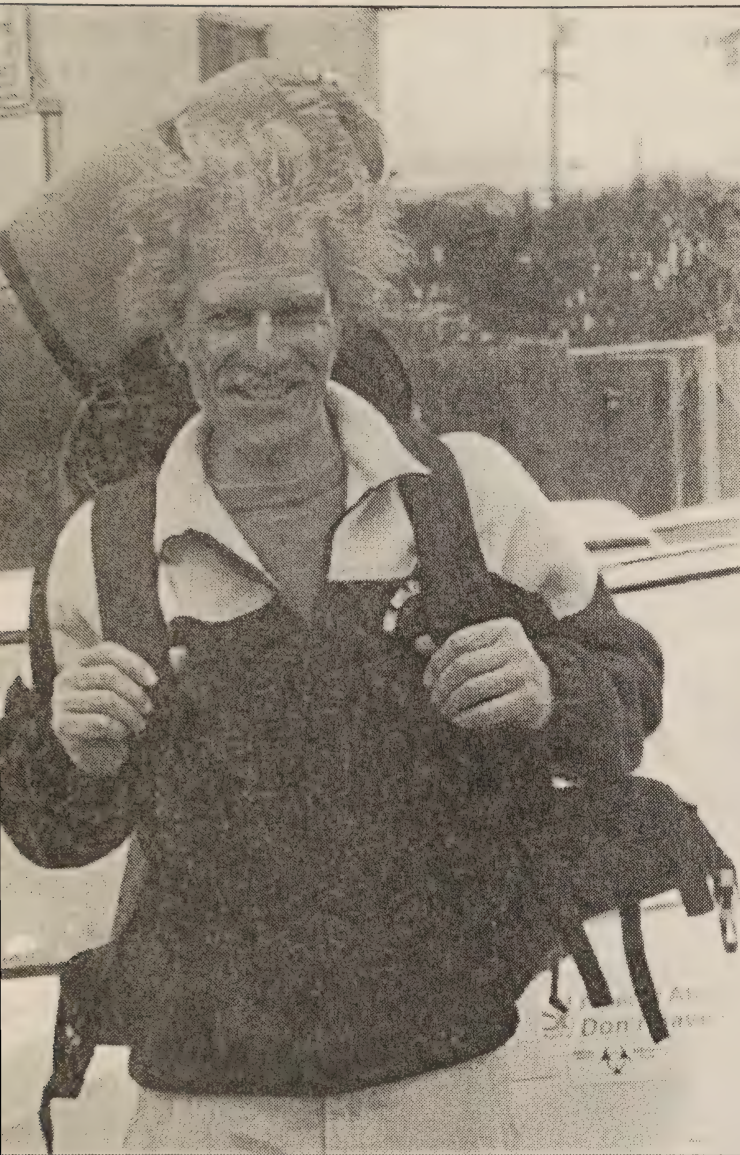
# ANDY



I'm in Love!



# GENE



"Miracles do occur," the Jewish *Talmud* states, "but they rarely provide food." Well, I was a rabbinical student as a child and attended Hebrew school full time for eight years. And yet I say the *Talmud* is all wet. Miracles occur six days a week in the East Bay and they *always* provide food.

Though I have no more religion now than a fruit-fly, still I know a miracle when I see one. What else would you call this? A bright day in People's Park, a friendly crew piling warm food on my plate. Precisely my kind of food—healthfully vegetarian, supremely delicious. All you want and all for free! Where am I? The sun, the smiles, the corn, the bagels. . . for a moment I had a glimpse of utopia, of society as it should be and could be.

The next evening I attended the FNB meeting. I liked what I heard. Terri asked me to cook the following day.

And so began a whole summer of sunny afternoons cutting—and eating—the most mouth-watering fruits: melons and peaches, pears

strawberries. We listened to music as we worked; we laughed and sang. Great discussions! You'd be surprised at how many philosophers and poets have nothing better to do than to sit and chop vegetables for hours. But what *is* better? The radiant sun, savory food, music—ah, please let this last forever. Could we, somehow, slow things down—make time stop? Yes, we did. Another miracle!

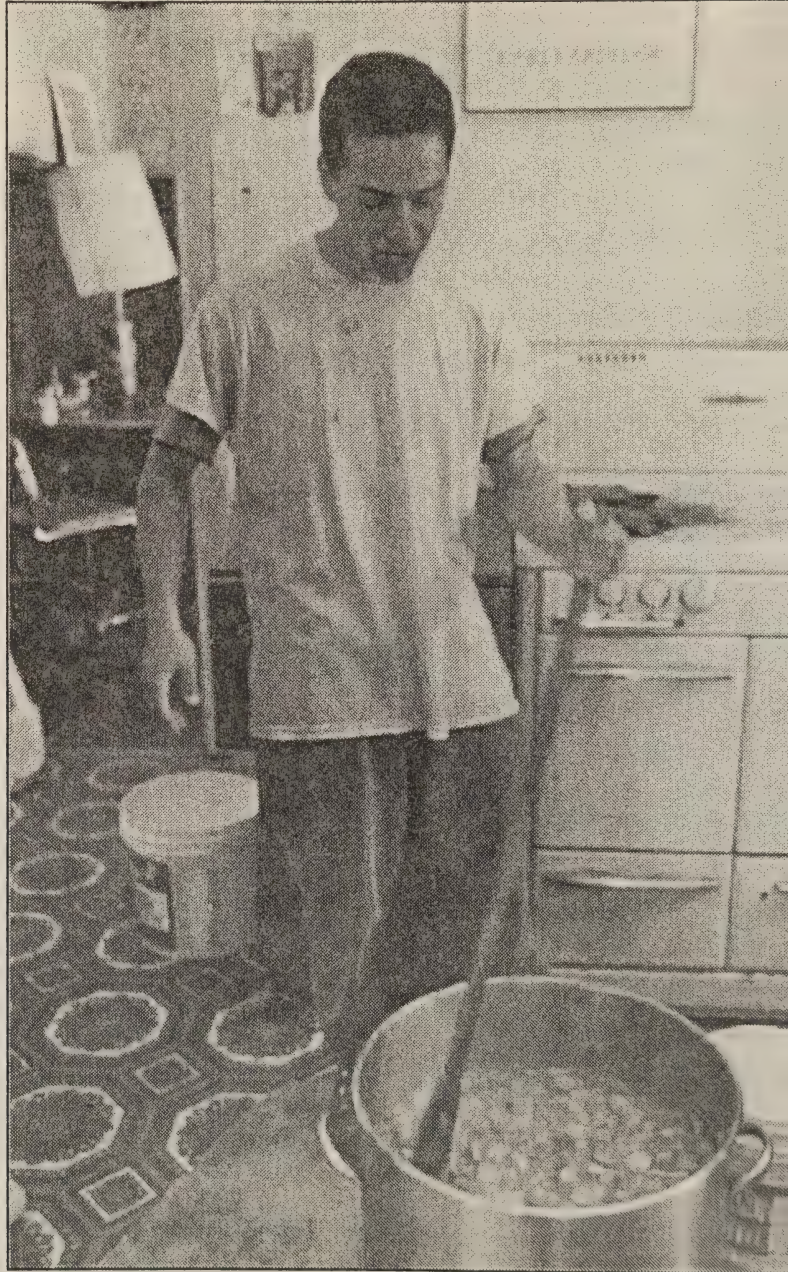
Or was it just an illusion? For soon we were dragging ourselves to work in fierce winds, rain, even hailstorms. But still we never failed to cook and serve that soup, that Food Bombs nutritious stew.

And so it's cooking and cleaning, eating and meeting. It's attending a demonstration in June at San Francisco's Hall of Injustice. It's going off in a caravan to Big Mountain to deliver food and tools to the Diné. It's hosting delegations of Foods Not Bombers from other cities, even other countries. It's a communal way of life as opposed to the corporate way of life. It's affection, friendship, family, it's. . . Wow. I got so carried away I forgot what else the *Talmud* says: "Anyone who eats in the street is like a dog." Hmmm . . . O.K. So isn't it a miracle that street dogs should care so much for each other?"



# ADAM

Vegetables are so much better than dollar bills. Similarly, a big steaming pot full of vegetables is immeasurably better than a big wad of bills. Food Not Bombs seems to have their priorities straight. They know that the carrot is mightier than the sword and that a revolution starts with full bellies for everyone no matter how many bills they have in their pockets. If you come from the same political persuasion as me, you will agree that even a purchase is political. For this reason I try to make as few purchases as possible. I figure that minimalizing politics is the same as maximizing community. Anyways, I wouldn't be able to sit around and think about all this stuff if I wasn't being fed by FNB every day and cooking with them once a week. Some day there will be a Siskel and Ebert for counter-institutions and Food Not Bombs will get two thumbs up!





# JAHNELLE

at I love about Food Not Bombs:

archy, bread, compassion and caresses, demilitarization and dirty dishes. Elements, the environment, freedom, gorgeous gardens, and hogans. Integrity, justice, kudos and liberation. radio. Mulch, nonviolence. Oakland. Peace. Quantum sufficit, the Revolution, spices the truth. Unity, visions, the worms and the work—xenophobia's defeat, youth in action, and the Zapatistas.



gula, beets, cumin, daikon, eggplant, focaccia and frijoles, garlic and greens, honey, ice, insatiable appetite for a better way of living and Indian food, jicama, kohlrabi, lentils, o, nettles, olive oil, persimmons, quinoa, rice with rosemary, spinach, tea, Uprisings, vegetable stew, wheat berries, xerophytes, yams and zucchini.



# ANNA

I got to my eleventh grade in high school and finally realized what I knew all along. I truly hated school and I couldn't stand it any longer. Being forced to go to a place that made me feel like Shit for being myself, where not only did I not learn, but I was drained of all will to learn anything. I pretty much stopped going to school, convincing my parents of course that I did. After a couple of months I took an equivalence test which broke the chains of my prison.

It was like a huge weight being lifted off my back and I was floating through my freedom, not really knowing what to do with it. The world seemed so bare and lonely, like everyone was so full of Shit. People sat around talking about how everything sucked and did nothing about it. Some people, like me, didn't even talk about it, they just stopped caring. Food Not Bombs gave me a place to land. You meet great people, eat great food, and learn so much more about the world than a mainstream news source can tell you. I know I'm not changing the world, but I'm helping to create a safe anarchy-based community, where society's waste turns into nourishment for the body and the earth.

I brought my little sister with me a couple of times, and it was great watching her small hands help alongside ours. I explained to her about the trouble in San Francisco and she couldn't understand why people were being arrested for giving food to people who needed it. Neither can I, I told her. We have to begin to teach the next generation, as well as this one, so together we can help heal the world that has been left for us.





# CHARLIE

Besides linear arrangement, the only comparable point between a Food Not Bombs serving line and a supermarket check-out line is the day-dreaming potential. While such activity on a FNB line and shortchange you a worldfull of human experience, it's more of a safety valve for sanity at the very. It was on an afternoon not too long ago that I found myself situated in another embarrassing market scene.

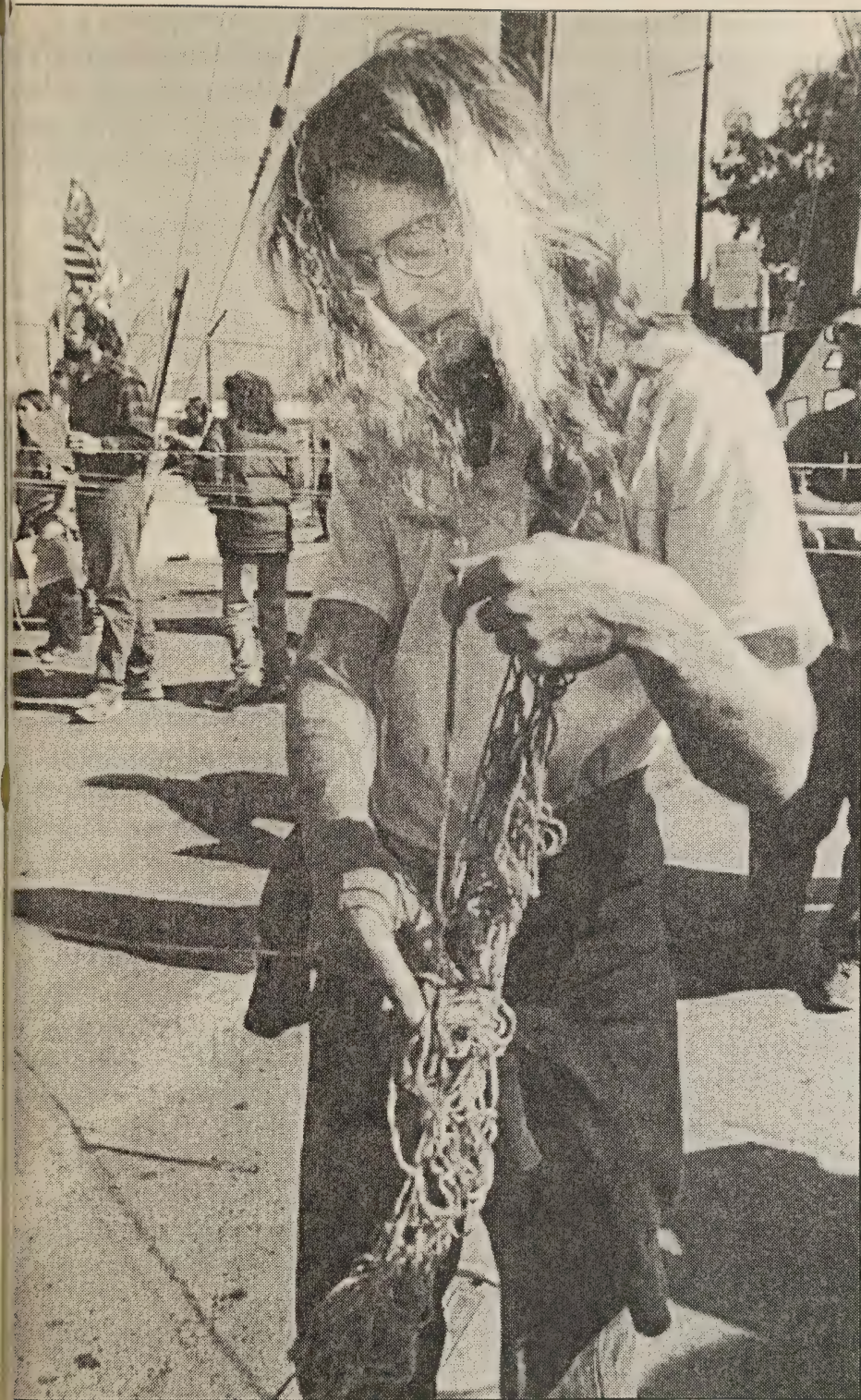
Prodded and slotted three back from the register, I took to one of those thin plastic check-out belt dividers like it was a hypnotist's watch. One moment my mind was stuck dawdling on the notion that those little food commodity dividers were kind of like someone drawing a line in the sand with a foot and daring you to cross it; the next moment the sun was filtering into some nice FNB back garden and there was Tristan showing me the proper brussel sprout prepping technique of carving offensive symbols into them before they hit the pop. This was not only most conducive to thorough cooking, but also a nice Anarcho-political conversation piece. As I watched him persevere through the carving of a circle around a stretch-the-imagination "E", I realized that this was one of the many FNB food-prep steps that most would deem unnecessary. Y'know, East Bay Food Not Bombs spends quite a bit of time tied up with public officials, press hounds, and other unopened hearts at large, all of whom want some sort of justification for our hosting of park picnics and highly-charged political events. While painting the big FNB picture for them, many points will come clearly to light and others will just have to be left to the unexplainable.

"That comes to \$15.29. Would you like paprika or ... sir? ... SIR!!?...!" My mind was free-floating over a 5-gallon bucket of guacamole when my first eyeful of reality was met by a rather unsettled man ranting about some set of numbers. I instantly figured him to be insane. When he told me that he wanted this number in currency!?!?!... For Food!!?!?! I knew that he was potentially dangerous. I quickly scoped the area for someone to help me subdue him. I realized that every face found these deranged incidents that were unfolding to be perfectly normal. I informed him that my reality lapse was due to a baseship transmission informing me that we had adequate soil samples and so there was no need for further processing of earth food. The dangling jaws around really looked in need of some sort of explanation but, some things are better left to the unexplainable.





# ARTHUR



We share this food, given by the fates and the overabundant dumpsters to dismantle the exploitative nature of human relations in this society and to praise the forces of chance, random occurrence, and freedom. This is our discipline: to the nine-fold aspect of the deity a

application of organization, three-fold aspect of our art-conception, implementation, and the endurance to follow through with love, our strength to build a community of resistance to the powers that have imposed this destructure upon us.



# ELISA



I used to feel that my life was destined to the wretchedness of grovelling all day just to keep a roof over my head or some shit. You only know what's around you and the money was looking funny, especially during lay-off time. But my Mom's iron will made a beautiful garden out of that little patch of ground in the front of our funky-ass house with sunflowers clamoring for hope and joy. All her hard work, though—holding things together—and still the evictions and the not-quite getting by. In the past few years I've been realizing what a huge force she has been in my life and that all of the activist shit that I do would be meaningless if it didn't address the kinds of needs she had as a mother busting ass to get by and raise a family.

I'd be wandering the UC angry because I was stressed out about money and so I'd go to People's Park to chill out. The Berkeley community had become like a family for me and the Park like a sense of home. Not in a four walls way but as a space where people are together and genuinely give a shit. At the memorial for Bob Sparks in the Park I was looking around and realizing that most all of these people who kept my spirit going back in '89 and '90, in my early Berkeley days were all people that I met around the Park in gatherings, in work, in vigils, in riots in the middle of the night. A place where we would do

ings together towards our common goal of social change in the everyday, our diverse visions all going in the same general direction. People would wind up in the Park looking for something, with our hopes, needs, problems, desperations, political ideas and mainly with our desire to be with other people connected in some way.

Then Stephen told me about Food Not Bombs starting and soon I got involved. No matter how battered the scene around the Park would get at least there would always be food, a tangible, constant thing, bringing us back down to earth, together. I've been living in Oakland now for a while and some of us have been doing a meal downtown at 14th and Jefferson on Sundays. That picnic on the street corner is a big highlight in my week.

I love FNB because the idea makes so much sense. Any talk about political vision starts out with how are these ideas going to put food on the plate and keep a roof over the family.

Doing FNB is one of the most meaningful things I do in my life because it answers that question how can you take care of basics, how do you keep your head together? As a community we can do much together. We're talking about nothing less that survival of the spirit. Because, when we come together in friendship around our needs or around anything, we're doing one of the most important things. We're breaking down the isolation.

I love Food Not Bombs because it is an idea that I see working every day. There are Food Not Bombs groups and other similar kinds of things sprouting up all over the place. Food Not Bombs is a way out of the morass and a way towards a whole new way of living.

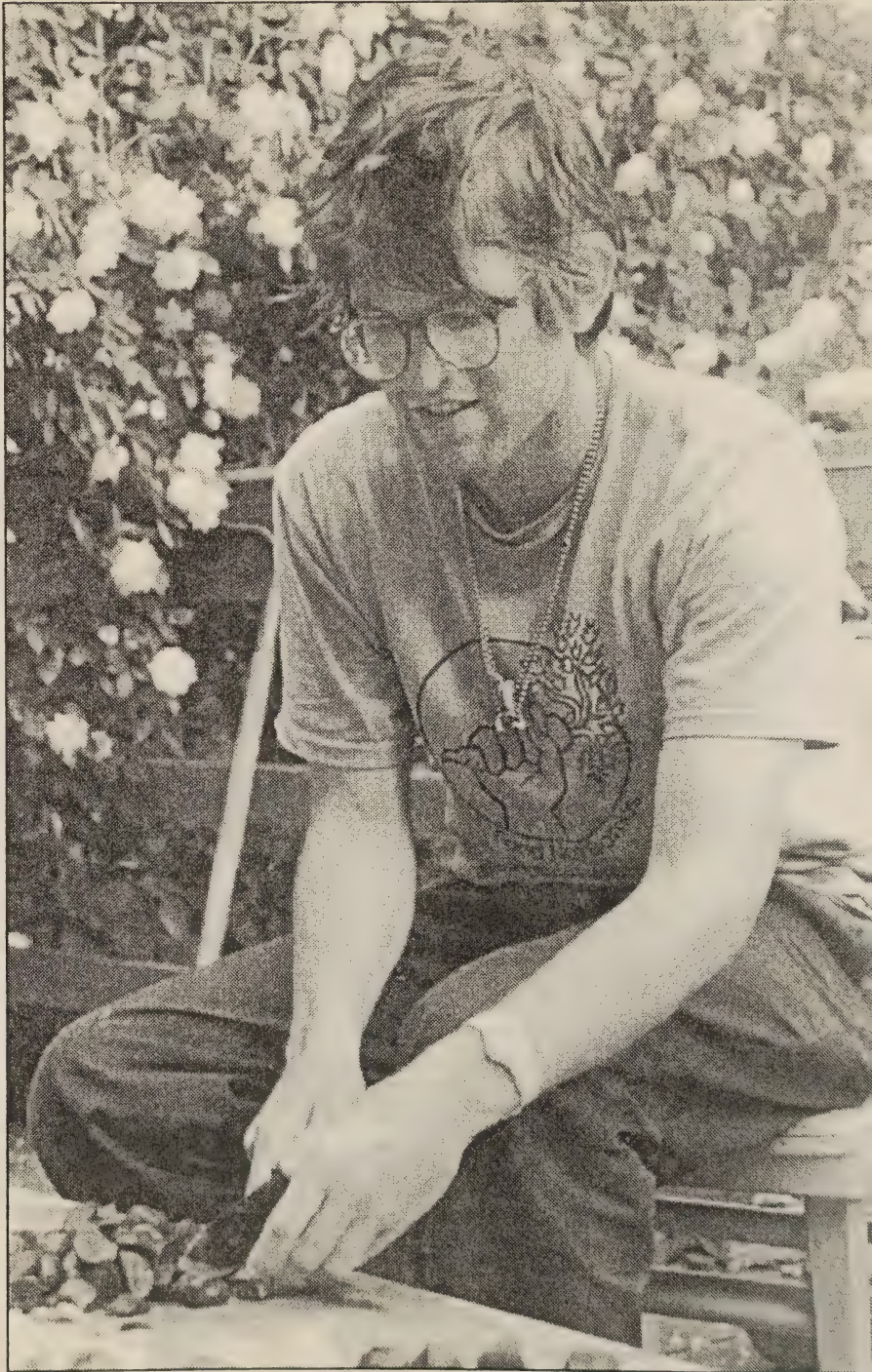


# STEVE

I discovered Food Not Bombs by watching television. Seeing people arrested for sharing food with the poor, I saw they were both practicing compassionate communalism and staking their ground to coercive authority. I rushed to San Francisco to check it out and participate. But I settled in Berkeley and Oakland, and was rarely able to be in San Francisco; my ability to stay involved was limited until Food Not Bombs formed in the East Bay and it's been rock and roll ever since.

In the context of the scene here, networking to become a focal point of a spontaneous autonomous grass roots mutual aid community was straightforward. The East Bay radical tradition includes People's Park, one of the more successful attempts at a permanent autonomous zone in the U.S.; the legacy of the apartheid struggle; the Free Speech Movement and the rest of the campus activist history; the Black Panthers; the Berkeley street community and more.

We grow organically, chaotically in all directions from here, everyone creating a new story.





# STIOBHARD

Food Not bombs has been my family for a number of years now. I first heard about it in 1997 in Texas. If I only realized then what an effect FNB would ultimately have on me. In 1999 I moved out to San Francisco and eventually Oakland to get involved in Without Borders. At that time I met Keith McHenry and started going to FNB as well as the John Trane Church and the Small Free Inn. I started cooking with the Small Free Inn on a regular basis and when my friends started doing East Bay FNB in Dogtown I helped them

move to the East Coast and discovered FNB again in Philadelphia. New Society Publishers, as Food Not Bombs, was making the most incredible TVP soup and *knish* smorgasbord every Wednesday evening. Finally Philadelphia drove me back to the West Coast. When I started squatting in Portrero Hill, SF Food Not Bombs became our lifeline so that all squatters in the city could talk to each other and relay important messages like eviction notices, new takeovers and daily stuff. December 1993, back in Austin, Texas: The local Anarchists start doing Critical Mass and trying to do FNB as well but still facing loads of problems. I hear now it's going strong there.

By October I'm in Berkeley again. I run into my Philadelphia neighbor and he invites me

to go to FNB. One bite and it's the most amazing thing I have ever eaten. I have to get involved with these people. I ask James for directions and he introduces me to a distracted Steve who gives me all the addresses. Before I know it I'm giving FNB all the time I have. FNB becomes my community and my life. Food Not Bombs has put me in touch with the best people I have ever known. Giving food to the hungry is fine but it's not what we're about. We're not a "service" in the park. FNB is us, helping ourselves. We are the eaters and the feeders. Food Not Bombs is about people, family, community, friendship. If you are looking for utopian visions of the future (or the past) we have it every day in People's Park. Don't slag Food Not Bombs. They are my friends. Food Not Bombs is me.





# HARMONY

It's good to be part of an organization that's really building the future instead of just resisting the present.

You all have taught me a lot—that everybody starts out inexperienced, that responsibility can be liberating (and frustrating when it's raining and you're alone at Chateau), that working together is the best way to build community, and that eggplant tastes damn good if you cook it right.

Most important—now I've got the courage to take responsibility when I fight other fights. You are my roots.

Thanks, FNB for putting life into a too-often gray world of activism.





# LYDIA

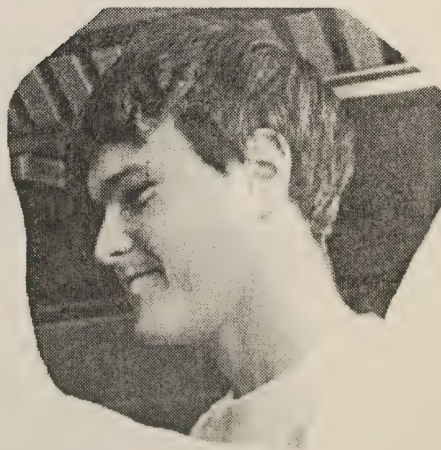
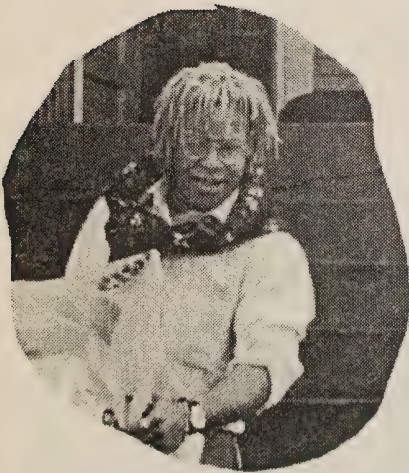
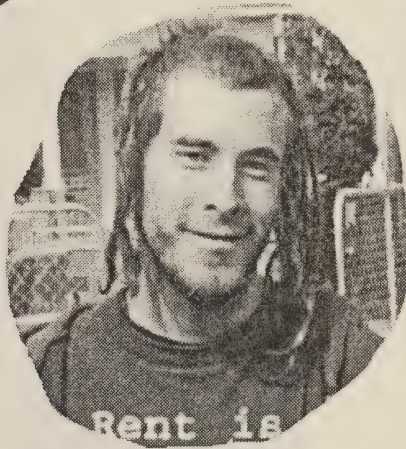
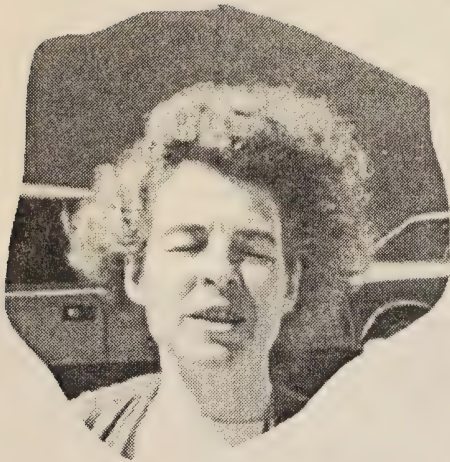
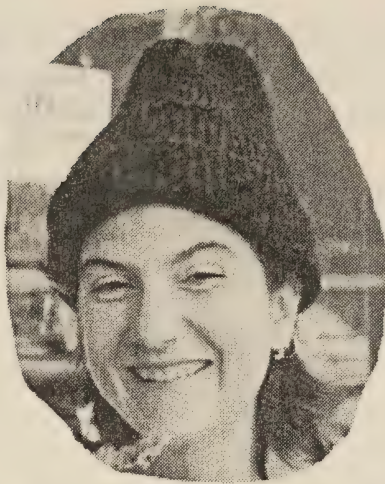
All my adult life I thought of cooking as a chore, like shopping and cleaning house for my family. Connecting with Food Not Bombs changed all that. The tedious jobs of chopping and preparing became a pleasure in the company of friends. Planning the meal, seasoning and getting it just right, add to the joy of being able to provide nourishment for people who need and appreciate it.

I am intensely troubled by the deterioration of life all around us and I have for a long time tried to find ways to help bring about change. But it has only gotten worse. More people are hungry and homeless, angry and abusive, lonely and hurting. I realize that there is no way for any one person to fix it all. But there are ways to change our immediate environment, to build a community which nurtures its members and makes little incremental changes which some day will add up to making a better world.

Getting involved in our political system no longer seems viable. Our government is unable to preserve our environment, to care for our people, to make sure that resources are spent on food, housing, health and education and not on weapons—on enhancing the quality of life, not on the efficiency of death. I think that Food Not Bombs is a response. Participating in the Food Not Bombs community is a meaningful and positive political act.









# FEED-BACK

At Food Not Bombs the whole process of getting the food, preparing, serving, eating, cleaning, recycling, and composting is a collective activity. Everyone participates on some level. So when we started making pictures and preparing this book, that too was bound to become a community project.

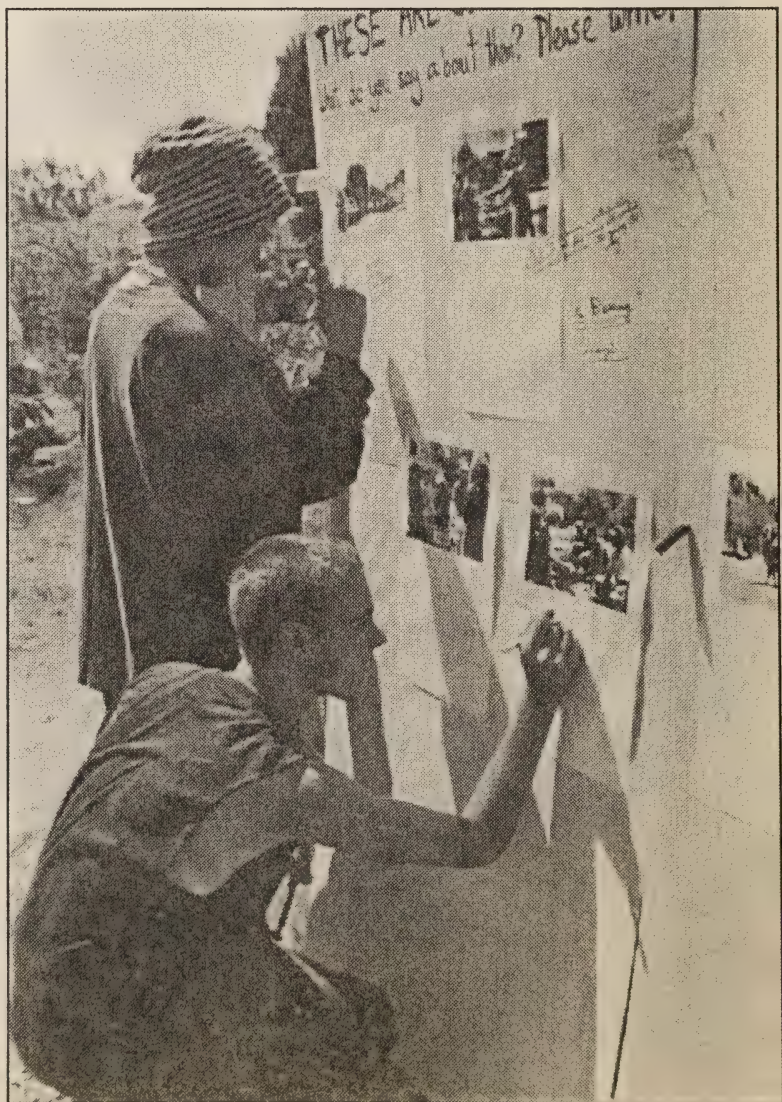
People added their remarks, little tasty bits of graffiti, to the photos we mounted on boards and played at our meals. Or they would fudge together a long declaration of love. Here we serve up just a few samples:

My tummy  
danks you!

You R so  
Cute.

Food ez  
Good.

can I have  
more of that  
Vegan stuff?





Being your slave  
what could I do but tend  
Upon the hours and times  
of your desire ♡ Casey

"A Blessing  
'Lloyd'

Food, Hope, love, Peace—  
"Keep on cooking"

I owe my survival  
to Food Not Bombs &  
I mean that literally—  
JH

The Quality  
of This Food  
is Better  
Than the Quality  
of MOST  
People's Brains.



Yummy  
AE

ANK GOD(DESS)

There is SHIT  
in the MATRIX  
as in the SHITTY (S.F.)  
[F.N.B. Forever]

P.S. I HATE  
VOLLEYBALL

It's a real pleasure, a satisfaction,  
to dish out the food we've all cooked,  
to see each person it's going to.  
Judy



Money is disappearing  
Food not Bombs is  
keeping me alive!



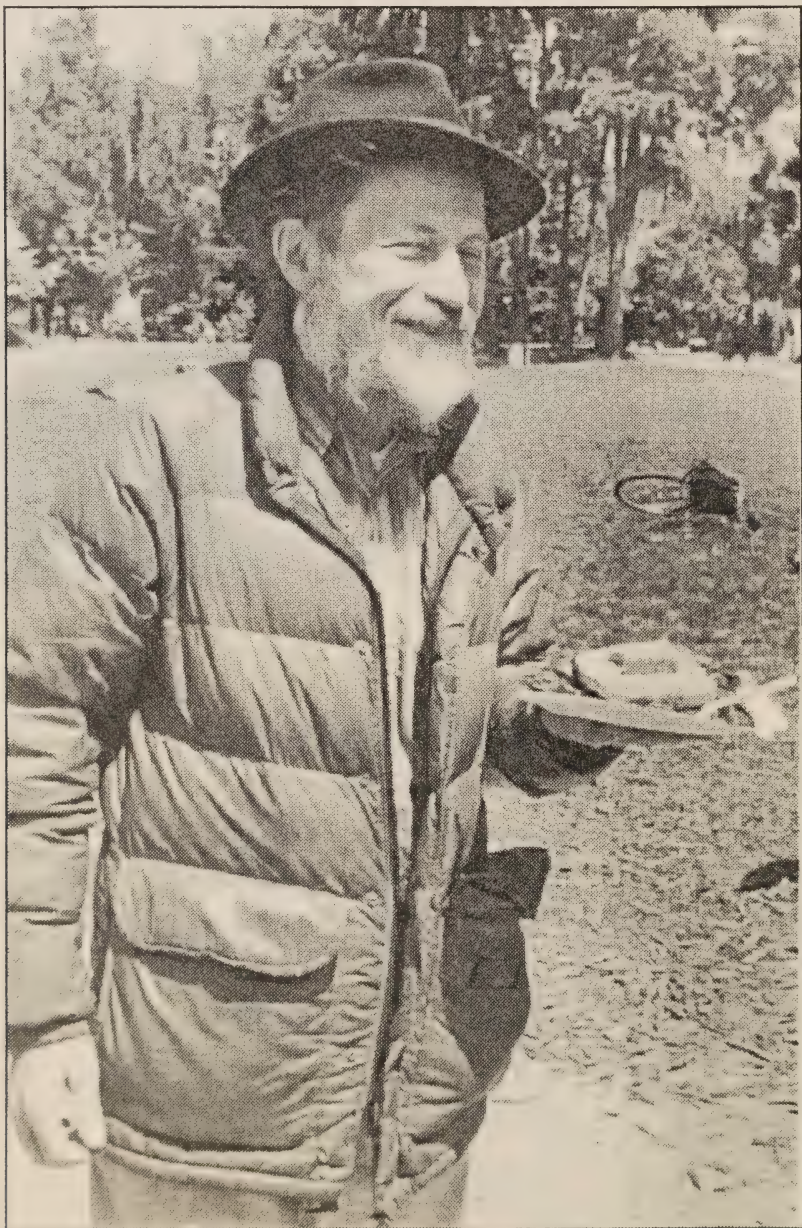
Beautiful People  
Wonderful Vibe  
Nourishing food  
Thank you All  
Much love + Good energy  
to you  
Safe TRAVELS to All!  
Love you  
STAR



# LES

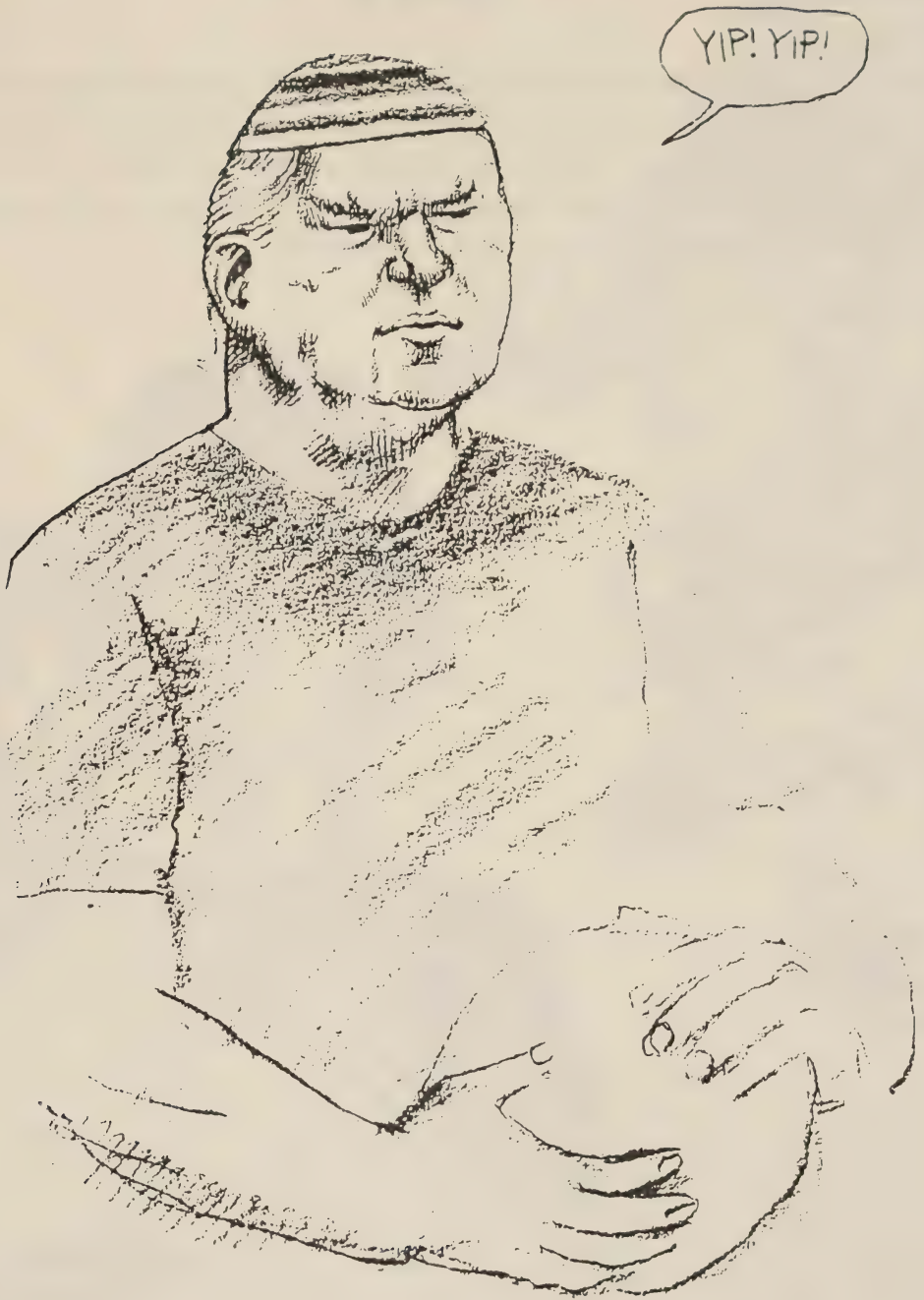
My money situation is stretched tight and for years before FNB what would be left out would be eating. (My friends would always tell me to eat.) I was skinny and ill tempered. And I lacked the energy to do what I needed to keep myself healthy. Since Food Not Bombs all that has changed. Although I'm not yet able to be in on the working side I am made to feel a part of it. What little I've got left after keeping my life going I spend on housing rights and Latin American issues. And FNB supports this work by supporting me.

Food Not Bombs is so different from the national policy of bombs and weapons first, and people and food last. It's so different from the other helping services. Even the best-run, with the best "attitude," still are somewhat condescending and patronizing; they can't help it, they are helping down" to the poor. FNB can't screw up like that; we are us. The person serving or cooking today was behind you in line yesterday!





# JONATHAN

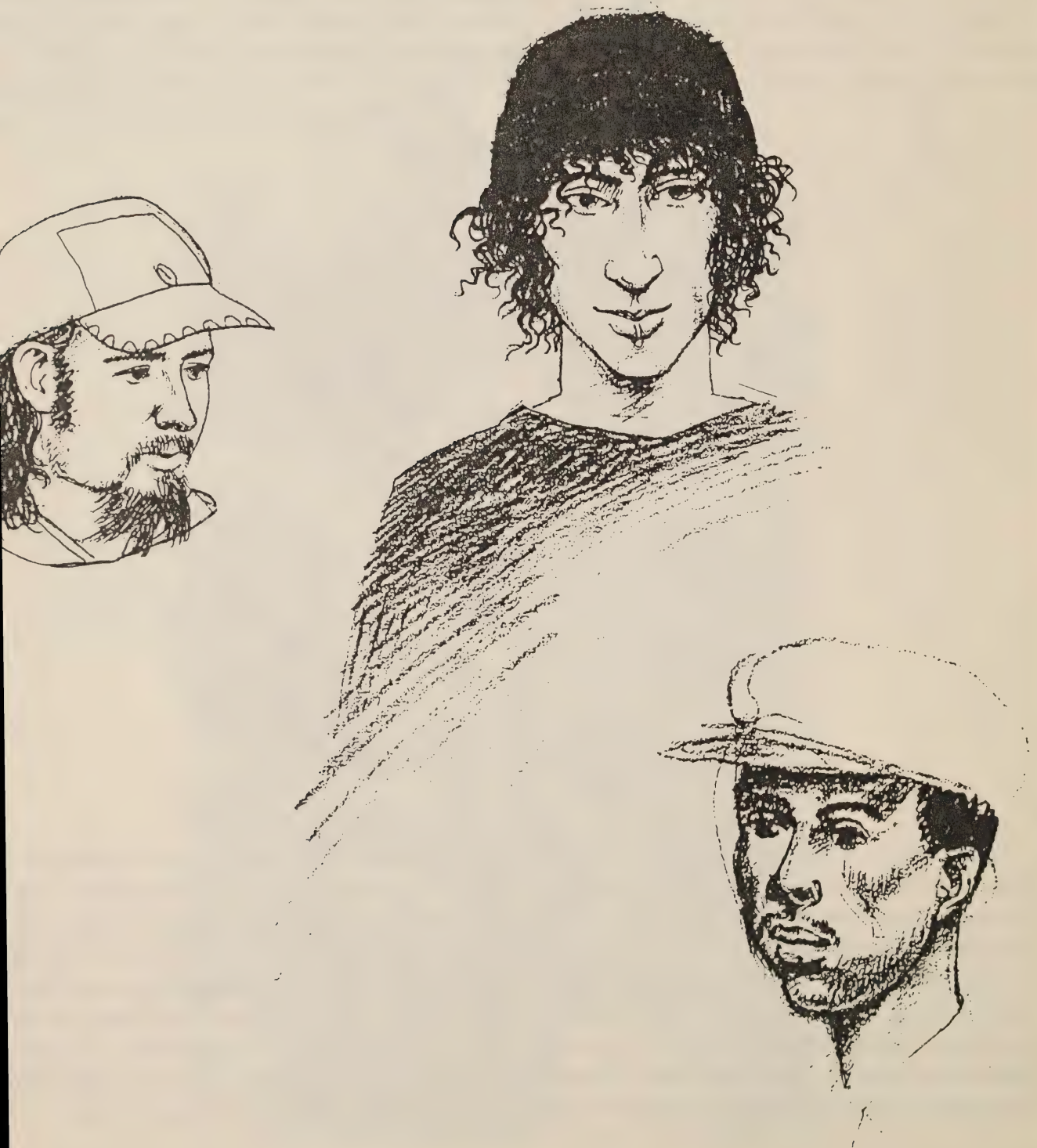


How often we were greeted with a whistle and a "Yip yip, here comes Food Not Bombs." We never did know what that "yip yip" meant. We never saw him eat. But he was there. Jonathan Montague was always there, greeting everyone by name, drawing new people into the fold. He embraced enormous numbers of people from the Ecology Center to Grassroots to the *Daily*. He was activist and poet. A story-teller. He would talk to anyone who listened about all the things he had done in his life but mostly he talked about how much he cared for the poor and homeless. Jonathan did not live to see this book, but oh how he would have whooped and hollered to greet it. Now he lives in these pages, and in the hearts of all who knew him. Jonathan Montague is a never-to-be-forgotten presence in Berkeley and People's Park.



# GUY

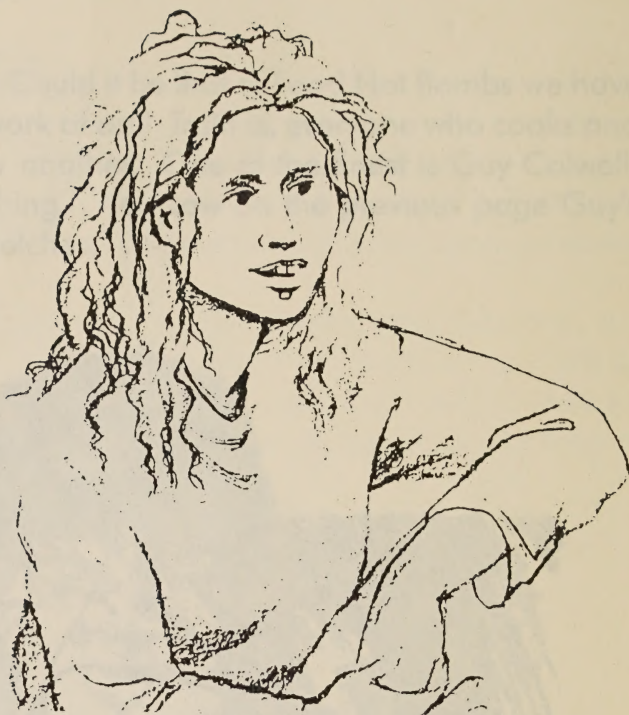
He may be poor in pocket, but oh so rich in spirit! Could it be that at Food Not Bombs we have found the secret of life? That we have made of life a work of art? Truth is, everyone who cooks and eats with Food Not Bombs is an artist of one kind or another. One of the finest is Guy Colwell. While cooking and eating he is watching and sketching. You saw on the previous page Guy's sketching of Jonathan. Here are some more of his sketches.













# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Heartfelt thanks and compliments to all who made this dream-of-a-book come true. begins with Joel, Travis, Paul, Jason, Julie, Judy X, Sam, Melissa, Ben, Rez, Terry, and many others who do Food Not Bombs day and night but do not have statements in this book. It includes those found in these pages who wrote movingly about the Food Not Bombs family. Tremendous thanks goes to Emanuel and Pablo for their desktop publishing/production skills.

Thanks to all friends of Food Not Bombs, some in homeless shelters, some in judges' chambers. Great thanks to the generous friends of FNB who donate food day after day. Perhaps foremost are Uprisings Bakery Collective as well as Monterey Foods. But then there's No Bagels, Cheese Board Collective, Whole Foods, Corn Cheaps, Living Foods, the Oakland Pro Market, Rockridge Cafe, Just Desserts, Brother's Bagels, the Marcobiotic Center—we could go on and on. To these big-hearted folks we are very grateful.

To those who eat with us and those who sing for us, to all who make Food Not Bombs an irresistible force this book is dedicated. To those who work Food Not Bombs in San Francisco who suffer police brutality for their labor of love. To those who came to San Francisco for the Food Bombs International Gathering. To those who give a quarter, a smile, or as little as an hour of labor—this book's for you.

Gene and Lydia for the Food Not Bombs Family  
(June 1991)







Correspondence and contributions can be sent to:

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(We appreciate all kinds of help. Donations are tax-deductible.)